NUMB. CXXI.

The GUARDIAN.

Hinc Exaudiri gemitus, iræque Leonum. Virg.

Thursday, July 30. 1713.

Roarings of the Lion.

Old NESTOR,

'EVER since the first Notice you gave of the Erection of that useful Monument of yours in *Button's* Coffee-house, I have had a restless Ambition to imitate the renowned *London* Prentice, and boldly venture my Head down the Throat of your Lion. The Subject of this Letter is a Relation of a Club wherein I am a Member, and which has made a considerable Noise of late, I mean the Silent Club. The Year of our Institution is 1604, the Number of Members twelve, and the Place of our Meeting is *Daniel's Alley* in *Holborn*. We look upon our selves as the Relicks of the old *Pythagoreans*, and have this Maxim in common with them, which is the Foundation of our Design, that *Talking spoils Company*. The President of our Society is one who was born Deaf and Dumb, and owes that Blessing to Nature, which in the rest of us is owing to Industry alone. I find upon Enquiry, that the greater part of us are married Men, and such whose Wives are remarkably fond at home: Hither we fly for Refuge, and enjoy at once the two greatest and most valuable Blessings, Company and Retirement. When that eminent Relation of yours, the *Spectator*, Published his Weekly Papers, and gave us that remarkable Account of his Silence (for you must know tho' we don't read, yet we inspect all such useful Essays) we seemed unanimous to invite him to partake our Secrecy, but 'twas unluckily objected, that he had just then published a Discourse of his at his own Club, and had not arrived to that happy Instinctivity of the Tongue, which we expected from a Man of his Understanding. You will wonder, perhaps, how we managed this Debate, but 'twill be easily accounted for, when I tell you that our Fingers are as nimble, and as infallible Interpreters of our Thoughts, as other Men's Tongues are; yet even this Mechanick Eloquence is only allowed upon the weightier Occasions. We admire the wise Institutions of the *Turks*, and other Eastern Nations, where all Commands are performed by officious Mutes; and we wonder that the polite Courts of Christendom should come so far short of the Majesty of Barbarians. *Ben Johnson* has gained an Eternal Reputation among us by his Play called *The Silent Woman*. Every Member here is another *Morose* while the Club is sitting, but at home they talk as much and as fast as his Family Occasions require, without breach of Statute. The Advantages we find from this Quakerlike Assembly are many. We consider, that the Understanding of Man is liable to Mistakes, and his Will fond of Contradictions, that Disputes, which are of no weight in themselves, are often very considerable in their Effects. The disuse of the Tongue is the only effectual Remedy against these. All Party Concerns, all private Scandal, all Insults over another Man's weaker Reasons, must there be lost, where no Disputes arise. Another Advantage which follows from the first, (and which is very rarely to be met with) is, that we are all upon the same Level in Conversation. A Wag of my Acquaintance used to add a third, *viz.* that, if ever we do Debate, we are sure to have all our Arguments at our Fingers ends. Of all *Longinus's* Remarks, we are most enamoured with that excellent Passage, where he mentions *Ajax's*

Ajax's Silence as one of the noblest Instances of the Sublime, and (if you will allow me to be free with a Namesake of yours) I should think that the everlasting Story-teller *Nestor*, had he been liken'd to the Ass instead of our Hero, he had suffered less by the Comparison.

'I have already described the Practice and Sentiments of this Society, and shall but barely mention the Report of the Neighbourhood, that we are not only as mute as Fishes, but that we drink like Fishes too; that we are like the *Welshman*'s Owl, tho' we don't sing we pay it off with thinking; others take us for an Assembly of disaffected Persons, nay their Zeal to the Government has carried them so far as to send, last Week, a Party of Constables to surprize us: You may easily imagine how exactly we represented the *Roman* Senators of old, sitting with majestick Silence, and undaunted at the Approach of an Army of *Gauls*. If you approve of our Undertaking, you need not declare it to the World; your Silence shall be interpreted as Consent given to the Honourable Body of Mutes, and in particular to

Your Humble Servant,

Ned Mum.

P. S. 'We have had but one Word spoken since the Foundation, for which the Member was expelled by the old *Roman* Custom of bending back the Thumb. He had just received the News of the Battel of *Hochstet*, and being too impatient to communicate his joy, was unfortunately transmy'd into a *Lapsus Linguæ*. We acted on the Principles of the *Roman Maulers*, and tho' we approved of the Cause of his Error as just, we condemned the Effect as a manifest Violation of his Duty.

I never could have thought a Dumb Man would have roared so well out of my Lion's Mouth. My next pretty Correspondent, like *Shakespear*'s Lion in *Pyramus* and *Thysbe*, roars and it were any Nightingale.

Mr. IRONSIDE, July 28, 1713.

'I Was afraid at first you were only in Jest, and 'had a mind to expose our Nakedness for the 'Diversion of the Town; but since I see that you 'are in good Earnest, and have Infallibility of your 'side, I cannot forbear returning my Thanks to you 'for the Care you take of us, having a Friend who 'has promised me to give my Letters to the Lion, 'till we can communicate our Thoughts to you 'through our own proper Vehicle. Now you 'must know, dear Sir, that if you don't take care 'to suppress this exorbitant Growth of the Female 'Chest, all that's left of my Waist must inevitably 'perish. It is at this time reduced to the Depth of 'four Inches, by what I have already made over to 'my Neck. But if the Clipping Design, mentioned 'by Mrs. *Figleaf* yesterday, should take effect, Sir, I 'dread to think what it will come to. In short, 'there is no help for it, my Girdle and all must go. 'This is the naked Truth of the Matter. Have 'pity on me then, my Dear *Guardian*, and preserve 'me from being so inhumanly exposed. I do assure 'you that I follow your Precepts as much as a 'young Woman can who will live in the World 'without being laughed at. I have no Hooped Petticoat, and when I am a Matron will wear broad 'Tuckers whether you succeed or no. If the 'Flying Project takes, I intend to be the last in 'Wings, being resolved in every thing to behave 'my self as becomes

Your most Obedient Ward.

This Paper is to be had of Mr. Yemes *under the* Thatch'd-house *Tavern in St.* James's-street; *Mrs.* Bond *at* Charing-cross; *Mrs.* Bolter *and Mrs.* Dodd *near the* Temple-gate; *and Mr.* Round *in* Exchange-Ally.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

AT the WATER THEATRE of the late [illegible] Mr. Winsbury, will be shown a very delightful [illegible] which will exceed all the 3 Parts that used to be performed, wherein all the grand Curiosities in Water-works as ever were seen; the admirable Barrel will be crowded with a Basket of sweet Flowers and Fruit, [illegible] of Water, which a Cupid presents to the Boxes, and 3 several sorts of Liquors hot and cold, coming out of the Barrel, with Biscuits, more which it is adorned with Sea Nymphs just before it is let in to please. Then will be in Water-works Galatea's Flight from Polyphemus, and when she is carried away in State by Neptune encircled by many Figures and lighted Torches, all playing of Water, and Fire mingling with it. Then will be a great Tempest of Thunder and Lightning, and Fire mingling with many Cascades of Water. To be performed all this Week between 5 and 6 of the Clock in the Evening, and no longer. This is at the lower End of Piccadilly towards Hide-Park. His famous House at Littleberry in Essex is in compleat order, and both are Shown for the Benefit of his Widow.

Stolen out of the Ground of Mr. Page of [illegible] in Middlesex, the 22nd of this Instant July, 1713, a large brown Gelding with a Star in his Forehead, well Paftorned, upwards of 15 Hands high, full Age, Walks, Trots, and Gallops, was flobb'd some time ago with a Bull's Horn on the near fide near the girting Place. Whoever gives Notice to Mr. Robert Nash at the Guy of Warwick in Witch-street near St. Clement's Church, so that he may be had again, shall have a Guinea Reward and Charges.

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